

# Southwest Ohio Regional Highlights 2012

## Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

### Rescuing the Auto Industry: More Jobs and Cleaner Cars



Americans are demanding high-tech, energy-efficient cars, and Ohioans are developing and building them. Sen. Brown is working to foster clean energy manufacturing while expanding Ohio's auto industry. In January, Sen. Brown traveled to Detroit, Michigan to join Amp Electric Vehicles, a Loveland based automotive manufacturer, as they revealed a new electric Jeep model at the North American International Auto Show. Sen. Brown also met with United Autoworkers and representatives from the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) to discuss how

the auto rescue not only stabilized Chrysler and General Motors, but also helped save and add manufacturing jobs throughout Ohio. CAR's analysis revealed that Ohio added more than 3,000 new auto jobs between 2009 and 2010, and by 2015, Ohio could add more than 3,500 jobs in the automotive sector.

### Training Southwest Ohioans for Jobs in Growing Industries

Ohio's manufacturing tradition is part of what makes our state great but Ohio workers must be trained for the high-tech jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Many hardworking Ohioans continue to struggle to find jobs while high-tech industries search to fill vacancies. Investments in high-tech job training will help unemployed workers find jobs and attract new employers to Ohio.

In January, Sen. Brown visited Cincinnati State Technical and Community College to announce an effort to connect out-of-work Ohioans with jobs in emerging and high-tech industries in Cincinnati. Sen. Brown highlighted a successful industry-sector jobs program that has trained hundreds of unemployed Ohioans for jobs in the emerging bioscience industry. He also outlined his bipartisan *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act*, legislation that would help unemployed workers train for high-tech jobs in their region. By tailoring workforce development to the needs of regional, high-growth industry, more workers receive placements and more businesses in the same "cluster" are attracted to the region.

In September, Sen. Brown announced new federal resources for the Clermont Campus of the University of Cincinnati to train 100 workers for jobs in advanced manufacturing. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded the grant to the University of Cincinnati's Center for Advanced Manufacturing to lease, improve, and furnish additional space in a former automobile plant for labs and classrooms. The expansion will allow the Center for Advanced

Manufacturing to train more unemployed or underemployed workers for jobs in high-tech manufacturing.

### **Strengthening Ohio's Aerospace Industry and Boosting Economic Development**

Ohio is an aerospace leader because we know how to design and build exceptional machinery. Ohio's innovative scientists and engineers, manufacturing strength, and talented workforce have driven our aerospace success over the last century. According to the Ohio Aerospace Institute, more than 1,200 companies support more than 120,000 jobs in Ohio's aerospace industry. From Cincinnati to Dayton to Columbus to Cleveland, hundreds of Ohio suppliers provide parts and components to cutting edge aerospace machinery. Sen. Brown is working to connect aerospace suppliers with more business. That's why he partnered with Airbus Americas to formalize a partnership between the company and Ohio suppliers, aimed at growing the state's aerospace industry.

In 2009 and 2010, Sen. Brown worked with the Ohio Edison Technology Centers and the Ohio Aerospace Institute to organize three procurement conferences – in Cleveland, Kettering, and Columbus – that connected more than 800 Ohio businesses and participants with opportunities to break into the Airbus supply chain. The summits were unique because they directly connected suppliers to potential contracting opportunities.



As a result of this partnership, in January, Sen. Brown joined Airbus and the National Composite Center (NCC) in Kettering to announce the establishment of a new aerospace research and development consortium. Under a five-year agreement and with an initial \$1 million investment, Airbus is working through the NCC with a consortium of Ohio aerospace suppliers, incubators, and universities to develop next-generation products for use in Airbus' new fleet.

In October, Sen. Brown brought Airbus and the NCC together again to announce a new partnership to identify and develop aerospace suppliers across Ohio. These suppliers will have the opportunity to compete for contract work with Airbus, ultimately leading to the creation of a centralized Ohio Materials Manufacturing Technology Hub that will focus on state-of-the-art materials processing, business analytics, supply chain development, and workforce training and development. This agreement has the potential to increase investment even further so that dozens and dozens of Ohio aerospace companies can be involved. This investment will further strengthen the Ohio manufacturing and material supply chain for Airbus and increase business for Ohio aerospace suppliers.

### **Advancing Aviation Technology: Testing Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Southwest Ohio**

Southwest Ohio has the aviation leadership, skilled workforce, innovative businesses, and strong military ties to become the nation's premiere test site for Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)



technologies. This industry has the potential to create high-paying research and manufacturing jobs in Ohio. In April, Sen. Brown announced that Sinclair Community College received approval for UAS testing at Springfield Air National Guard Base.

Sen. Brown is urging the Obama Administration to locate the testing site in the Miami Valley. He also successfully amended the *Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act* to increase the number of designated UAS testing sites across the country and save taxpayer dollars by ensuring sites selected have the infrastructure necessary to carry out these tests.

Sen. Brown then visited the UAS training center at Sinclair Community College in August to outline his plan to bolster emerging regional industries like UAS by ensuring that Ohioans have the necessary skills and training needed to attract and fill high-tech jobs.

### **Protecting U.S. Postal Service Jobs & Services in Southwest Ohio**

The closure of dozens of postal processing centers and post offices would be devastating for thousands of Ohioans and could have a serious impact on local economies. As the United States Postal Service (USPS) considered various options to streamline and consolidate operations, Sen. Brown repeatedly lobbied the USPS to save jobs and maintain service across Ohio. Because of his work, a number of Mail & Processing Distribution Centers and many rural post offices throughout the state will remain open while the USPS takes steps to support the postal service's long-term solvency. In February, Sen. Brown announced that Cincinnati's Dalton Avenue mail processing and distribution center will remain open.

In February, however, the USPS also announced plans to close nine Mail & Processing Distribution Centers in Ohio—including the Dayton mail processing and distribution center—despite a moratorium aimed at preventing consolidation until Congress passed postal reform legislation. Sen. Brown called on the USPS to halt consolidation and joined the City of Dayton and the Dayton Development Coalition in expressing concern that the Dayton closure would hurt service for Miami Valley businesses. In March, Sen. Brown met with Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to push the USPS to minimize the closure of processing centers and postal offices in Ohio, preserve rural post offices, and maintain six-day mail delivery.

In April, the Senate passed a postal reform bill to temporarily preserve Ohio's USPS, including Saturday delivery. Sen. Brown continues to support a compromise that will support USPS workers, protect taxpayers, and maintain consistent, high-quality mail service.

### **Rehabilitating Middletown's Downtown Core**

Rehabilitating vacant and abandoned buildings will drive more business to downtown cores, support property values, and increase economic growth. Sen. Brown worked to secure a \$1

million loan guarantee from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development for the City of Middletown to start the first phase of a downtown rehabilitation project. This financing will help the City of Middletown redevelop its downtown—creating construction jobs, attracting businesses, and boosting city revenue. Sen. Brown worked to secure the loan guarantee. One of the buildings will be leased to Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, which is partnering with more than 30 local businesses to train current employees and unemployed workers for new and advanced careers.

### **Promoting Tourism and Boosting Economic Development in Southwest Ohio**

Ohio has a strong tourism industry but there is more to be done to make sure visitors know about all of Ohio's world-class attractions. During a working conference call in July, Sen. Brown discussed strategies for boosting Ohio's tourism industry with representatives from the Freedom Center, National Aviation Hall of Fame, Dayton Performing Arts Alliance, and other Ohio stakeholders. They were joined by Brand USA, a new public-private entity that seeks to bring more visitors to the United States and to create economic activity and jobs in Ohio and across the nation. Washington needs Ohio's ideas and it is important for Sen. Brown to hear from Ohio's tourism industry leaders to help put their ideas into action.

## **Helping Southwest Ohio Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs**

### **Helping Southwest Ohio Small Businesses to Increase Exports**

It is critical that more Ohio small businesses become engaged in the global economy and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has programs that can be leveraged to help small businesses expand into new markets and hire workers. In April, Sen. Brown and SBA Deputy Administrator Marie Johns visited KOST USA, Inc. – a family-owned small business in Cincinnati that has hired nearly 30 workers because of two SBA 504 loans – to announce additional resources available for Ohio companies looking to grow by increasing exports.

### **Keeping Clothing Manufacturing Jobs in Ohio**

Ohio is a great place to do business, but small business owners also know that our nation's tax code encourages them to ship jobs overseas. A Darke County business owner advised a key Senate Committee in Washington in July and discussed his experience as an Ohio small business owner competing in the apparel industry. Sen. Brown nominated Lawson Nickol, owner of the All American Clothing Co, to join job creators from around the U.S. to testify before the Senate Democratic Steering Committee. Nickol's All American Clothing Company was opened 10 years ago and sells only USA-Made clothing.

Sen. Brown is working to pass the *Bring Jobs Home Act* to help small business owners like Nickol and end the backwards practice that allows businesses to deduct from their taxes the cost of shipping jobs overseas. Sen. Brown's office has been working with Nickol on his plans to create more jobs in Darke County.

Nickol founded the All American Clothing Company in 2002 after learning that his previous employer was outsourcing some of its work to Mexico. The company has experienced growth every year since its inception. Nickol now has plans to expand his business. Recently, Nickol

purchased a new facility that will allow him to expand operations, increase his payroll, and create more jobs in Southwest Ohio.

### **Connecting Small and Mid-Sized Manufacturers to Supply Chains**

Ohio's strong defense presence can boost our state's already strong legacy in manufacturing. By connecting Ohio businesses with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) supply chain, Ohio businesses can expand manufacturing and innovation, maintain and create more jobs, and generate economic activity in the Miami Valley and throughout Ohio. A representative from Sen. Brown's office attended the "Ohio Defense Connects" conference in Dayton in August to discuss efforts to connect Ohio's small and mid-sized manufacturers with the DOD supply chain. These connections will ensure that Ohio manufacturers have access to federal resources and opportunities to tap into existing business opportunities—particularly at Wright Patterson Air Force Base and other DOD installments.

## **Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Southwest Ohio Jobs**

### **Fighting Chinese Currency Manipulation to help Miami Valley Manufacturers**

Currency manipulation is an illegal trade practice in which the Chinese government intentionally devalues its own currency against the United States dollar, resulting in artificially expensive American imports to China and artificially cheap Chinese imports to the United States. This puts Ohio and American manufacturers at a serious disadvantage and makes it more difficult for American companies to compete against Chinese companies.

In January, Sen. Brown visited Harco Manufacturing in Moraine to call on the House of Representatives to pass legislation that would allow the U.S. to stand up for American manufacturers when China cheats by manipulating its currency. Sen. Brown joined Harco General Manager Rick Garver, Dayton City Commissioner Nan Whaley, and Montgomery County Commissioner Judy Dodge to discuss how Ohio companies are losing business and are being undercut by 25-40 percent on price by Chinese competitors, Sen. Brown outlined how his China currency legislation would create jobs and provide immediate relief to Ohio manufacturers facing a flood of cheap Chinese imports – at no cost to taxpayers – if it is passed by the House of Representatives and signed by the President. Sen. Brown's bill, the *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Reform Act of 2011*, cleared the Senate in October 2011 by a vote of 63-35 – representing the biggest bipartisan jobs package passed by the Senate last year.

### **Fighting Against Chinese Trade Barriers on American-Made Steel**

We know how to make things in Ohio—especially steel. Ohio workers can compete with anyone in the world, but only when the playing field is level. In June, The World Trade Organization (WTO) ruled that that duties placed by China on American steel violate the WTO rules. China argued that U.S. "Buy America" provisions included in the *Recovery Act* acted as a subsidy that warranted duties. The WTO ruled that China's retaliatory duties were a clear violation of international trade law. China appealed the ruling, but the decision was upheld by the WTO in October. Sen. Brown highlighted how both decisions will remove barriers that prevent companies like AK Steel from selling their products in the global marketplace. AK Steel employs about 6,200 workers in Middletown, Mansfield, Coshocton and Zanesville, as well as sites in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Indiana.

### **Keeping Production Costs Low for Ohio Manufacturers by Renewing Duty Suspensions**

Keeping production and overhead costs low for Ohio manufacturers is vital to saving Ohio jobs. Sen. Brown introduced three bills to renew duty suspensions on chemicals used by BASF in Greenville to manufacture concrete and automotive coatings. The bills would temporarily suspend duties on chemicals not otherwise produced in the U.S., helping to save jobs at BASF and keeping production costs low. The bills would help ensure that BASF can continue to do business in Darke County.

### **Honoring a Miami County Company for Excellence in Exports**

Exports help to create jobs in Ohio and are a key factor in our economic recovery. French Oil Mill Machinery Co. of Piqua exemplifies Ohio's proud legacy of production and enhance our state's ability to be a major player in the international market. In May, Sen. Brown recognized French Oil Mill Machinery Co. for receiving the Presidential "E" Award for Exports from the U.S. Department of Commerce. The "E" Star Award for Exports recognizes sustained, superior performance in increasing or promoting exports. Founded in 1900, French Oil Mill Machinery is a family-owned company that designs and manufactures equipment for the molding, oilseed, pulping, and synthetic rubber industries.

### **Helping Southwest Ohioans Affected by Trade Get Back on Their Feet**

Ohioans who work hard and play by the rules should not be left to struggle when they lose their job through no fault of their own. The federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose work hours and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. In early 2012, Appleton Papers announced that it would be downsizing one of its major factories in West Carrollton, a community near Dayton. The downsizing effectively left 330 Southwest Ohioans out of work. Sen. Brown urged the U.S. Department of Labor to approve the TAA petition application filed on behalf of workers at the West Carrollton factory. In June, Sen. Brown announced that the workers were eligible to apply for assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor.

TAA assistance was also awarded to workers at two Southwest Ohio companies. Approximately 80 workers at Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company, LLC in Norwood and Lebanon and 30 workers at Ahlstrom West Carrollton LLC in Montgomery County will receive assistance. In December the U.S. Department of Labor approved certification for 120 workers at Fortis Plastics, LLC in Clinton County to apply for worker adjustment assistance. These resources will help displaced workers with financial support and training opportunities to get a fresh start.

### **Working Together to Protect Domestic Paper**

The domestic paper industry is being undermined and undercut by illegal trade practices from other countries. In June, Sens. Brown and Portman worked together to protect hard-working Ohioans by urging the International Trade Commission (ITC) to continue existing antidumping and countervailing duty orders that help defend jobs at Mead Products in Kettering. With current duties at risk of expiring, the Senators sent a letter to the Chair of the ITC asking the commission to maintain existing relief against unfairly traded imports of lined paper school supplies from China, India, and Indonesia. These orders—which went into effect in 2006 and are reviewed every five years—are critical for Mead Products to maintain jobs and keep prices fair for domestically produced lined paper. The company employs 250 workers in Kettering.

## **Building Southwest Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation**

### **Creating Jobs and Building a Safer Bridge**

Investments in road construction projects and bridge repairs put Ohioans back to work, while promoting economic growth. With a strong display of bipartisanship in March, the U.S. Senate passed a transportation jobs bill – *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* – which will provide critical funds and jump start important infrastructure projects like repairing Brent Spence Bridge.

In May, as a House-Senate conference committee finalized a transportation jobs bill, Sen. Brown and Reps. Geoff Davis (R-KY) and Jean Schmidt (R-OH) expressed bipartisan, bicameral support and urged conferees to include a provision to support large-scale transportation projects of “national and regional significance” – like the Brent Spence Bridge – in the final version of the highway bill. Sen. Brown will continue to support critical infrastructure projects that create and protect jobs and increase economic competitiveness.

In advance of a meeting between Gov. John Kasich of Ohio and Gov. Steve Beshear of Kentucky, Sen. Brown expressed support for efforts to accelerate replacement of the Brent Spence Bridge. The governors announced an agreement to create a dedicated, cross-state management team to explore financing options for improvements on the bridge. The Brent Spence Bridge carries millions of dollars of our nation’s goods across the Ohio-Kentucky state line every day. It is important that both state and federal leaders work together to ensure this bridge renovation moves forward.

### **Connecting Southwest Ohio to the Nation by Increasing Flights**

In an age where business occurs on a global scale, easy access to New York City and other destinations is crucial for the success of Dayton businesses. In early 2012, Delta Airlines announced that it would discontinue daily, nonstop flights from Dayton International Airport (DAY) to New York’s LaGuardia Airport (LGA). Averaging around three flights per day, the Delta trips to New York were considered an essential component of Dayton’s business advantage. In February, Sen. Brown joined the outcry from local Dayton officials by writing a letter to U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. Sen. Brown urged Mr. LaHood to consider the consequences of ending the nonstop flights to LaGuardia for Dayton businesses. In October, Sen. Brown announced that DAY will again provide two direct daily flights to and from LGA beginning January 4, 2013.

### **Modernizing I-75 to Improve Safety and Increase Economic Growth**

The vast network of roads across Ohio connects towns and cities across our great state. Maintenance of these roads not only ensures that Ohioans can travel safely, but also provides jobs for Ohioans, strengthens communities, and moves commerce. In June, Sen. Brown joined workers and local business owners in Dayton to stress the importance of the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act*, known as the highway bill, which funds the I-75 Modernization Program. This program is widening the highway to three lanes in both directions to ease the heavy traffic flow and replace bridges to improve safety. It will do more than reduce traffic congestion and update aging bridges; it will help the Miami Valley grow – through jobs

and economic development. Hundreds of Ohioans are at work on the I-75 modernization project. Currently, 120,000 cars and 20,000 commercial trucks travel through the I-75 corridor each day.

In August, Sen. Brown announced that the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) will receive new federal resources to help improve I-75 in Dayton from Fifth Street to Riverview Avenue. The reconstruction will consolidate ramps into a centrally located interchange that will help Dayton make the needed repairs and keep Ohioans moving.

### **Building Broadband Infrastructure to Connect Rural Ohioans in Southwest Ohio**

Internet affordability, reliability, and adoption challenges persist in many parts of Ohio. By bridging the so-called “digital divide” and expanding broadband service, Ohio’s rural schools, businesses, and communities will have an opportunity to compete on a national and global level. In July, Sen. Brown announced new resources to connect 6,000 rural Ohioans with affordable broadband service. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC)’s Connect America Fund helps to connect rural Ohio to the Web and will provide Frontier Communications Corp. and CenturyLink Inc. in Ohio with \$1,814,100 to build broadband infrastructure in more than 2,300 locations across the state over the next three years.

Sen. Brown has worked tirelessly to bring broadband access to Ohio’s rural communities. In April, he introduced the Connecting Rural America Act, which would strengthen U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs that provide for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service to underserved, rural communities. This legislation was included in the *Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act* – the Senate farm bill – which reauthorizes the existing Rural Broadband Loan Program.

### **Federal Resources to Improve Southwest Ohio Airports**

All of Southwest Ohio’s airports provide important travel services to the region. The Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) was awarded Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) resources in 2012 to improve the runway and taxiway. In addition, the Butler County Regional Airport received FAA funds to improve its taxiway and remove obstructions in the runway approach surface. The Butler County Regional Airport provides important travel services to Hamilton-area business travelers, flight students, and visitors. These funds will improve the safety and efficiency at CVG and the Butler County Regional Airport so that they can remain a reliable option for air travelers in Southwest Ohio.

### **Improving Wastewater Management in Montgomery County**

Water and sewer infrastructure is critical to economic competitiveness. While all Ohioans deserve access to clean water, many communities are struggling to afford costly but necessary upgrades to water systems. Sen. Brown announced in June that the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners was awarded a \$2,482,000 loan and a \$2,128,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program to construct a new wastewater collection system for the Village of Phillipsburg. These new resources will help the Village of Phillipsburg make long-overdue updates and maintain a modern sewage system that can help attract new jobs and economic development.

In February, Sen. Brown introduced *the Clean Water Affordability Act*, legislation that would help communities make renovations to outdated sewer systems, while improving water quality and keeping rates affordable for residents and small business.

## **Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement**

### **Protecting Southwest Ohio's First Responders**

Ohio's first responders put their lives on the line every day. Sen. Brown continues to fight for additional funds to ensure that firefighters across the state have the resources they need to perform their jobs safely. In 2012, Southwest Ohio communities were among those awarded grants through the federal Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program and the SAFER program, including the Crosby Township Fire Department, Clearcreek Fire Department in Springboro, Batvia Fire Department, Fire Department of Middletown, Mason Fire Department, Cincinnati Fire Department, and Piqua Fire Department.

### **Connecting Southwest Ohio Veterans with New Employment Opportunities**

Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *VOW to Hire Heroes Act*, a veterans jobs law enacted in November that created the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). VRAP is a joint Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Labor training initiative that provides unemployed veterans between the ages of 35 and 60 the opportunity to pursue training for new careers in high demand occupations. VRAP offers up to 12 months of training assistance to unemployed veterans.

In July and August, Sen. Brown traveled across Ohio to encourage eligible Ohio veterans to apply. In Youngstown, Dayton, and Toledo, Sen. Brown joined veterans who will train for new careers at Ohio schools to encourage more Ohio veterans to apply for VRAP assistance.



### **Listening to the Concerns of Southwest Ohio Veterans**

Too many veterans face difficulties in transitioning from service to citizen, or struggle to attain the benefits and services they earned. That is why Sen. Brown convened field hearings, roundtables, and jobs fairs across Ohio to hear directly from veterans and to examine how the VA can better serve veterans throughout the state. In April, Sen. Brown's office held roundtables in Lima, Sidney, and Dayton to listen to and discuss the concerns of veterans. The conversations included topics about the defense budget, TRICARE, VA efficiency and prescriptions, protection of veteran benefits, the accessibility of jobs, and more.

### **Housing Veterans Health Archives in Dayton**

The Miami Valley's proud military tradition would make it a fitting home to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Archives. This facility would promote economic development and solidify Ohio as the nation's leader in veteran's medical care and expertise. In July, Sen. Brown

urged the Obama Administration to expedite the establishment and construction of VHA Archives at the VA Medical Center campus in Dayton. In a letter to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki, Sen. Brown asked the VA to move up the project on the list of prioritized projects.

Currently, the VA archives are kept in multiple locations. When the VHA decided to consolidate its archives into one central location, Dayton was immediately considered as a potential home. If Dayton is chosen, the facility would be open to the public and would bring jobs to the Miami Valley, solidifying its reputation as a region with a high-concentration of military and veterans' expertise and knowledge.



### **First Female 4-Star General Confirmed as Commander of Air Force Materiel Command**

Janet C. Wolfenbarger – a native of Beavercreek– was confirmed in June to become the next commander of the Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC), making her the first female 4-star general in the history of the United States Air Force. Sen. Brown congratulated Gen. Wolfenbarger for this well-deserved promotion and was proud that the Air Force's first female four-star general was born in Ohio and will serve in our state as the commander of the AFMC. With roots in the Miami Valley, Gen. Wolfenbarger has shown strong leadership and an eagerness to serve throughout her career, and the men and women of the U.S. Air Force have relied on her experience and courage.

### **Heroes Welcoming Heroes**

Ohio's servicemembers put their lives on the line for their nation and have earned our respect and deep gratitude. Sen. Brown's office joins their loved ones and all Ohioans in welcoming them back. Representatives from Sen. Brown's office were in attendance to celebrate as returning service members from the United States Air Force enjoyed the bi-annual "Heroes Welcoming Heroes" event at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in May. The ceremony honors the service of the returning veterans as well as the heroes at home such as spouses, children, and other family members of those serving in the Air Force.

### **Nominating Southwest Ohio Students to U.S. Service Academies**

Ohio schools are training leaders for the next generation of military personnel, and Sen. Brown is honored to nominate outstanding students for our prestigious U.S. Military Service Academies. In January, Sen. Brown proudly nominated seven high school seniors from Southwest Ohio to attend national service academies. Students from Clermont, Greene, Montgomery, and Warren Counties and were nominated to attend the Air Force, Merchant Marine, Naval, and Military Academies. Nomination to a service academy is one of the highest honors a high school senior can receive. These students embody the integrity and courage needed to represent and uphold the values of our nation. Sen. Brown is grateful for their dedication to serving our country.

### **Upgrading Transportation Service for Veterans in Montgomery County**

The Miami Valley is home to thousands of veterans and military families. Whether they need to access services at the local VA or just to get to work, our veterans—like all Ohioans—deserve access to reliable transportation. Sen. Brown announced in July that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Transit Administration awarded \$450,000 to Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority (Dayton RTA) in Montgomery County to improve transportation options for veterans. The funds will help improve the coordination of rides and public transit options for military families in the Dayton area.

### **Helping Homeless and Low-Income Veterans**

We as Americans have promised the men and women of the Armed Forces that if they defend our country, a grateful nation will provide them with the services and benefits they have earned. New federal resources announced in July will provide critical support services for homeless and low-income veterans in Cincinnati. Sen. Brown announced that the Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries Rehabilitation Center, Inc. in Hamilton County was awarded a new federal grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Supportive Service for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. The \$596,984 grant will be used to provide supportive services to low-income veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing.

### **Protecting Servicemembers and Their Families at Home**

Too often, increased deployments for our troops have been met with growing abuses of servicemembers' rights. Servicemembers have experienced issues including: financial institutions initiating foreclosure proceedings while a servicemember is deployed; delays in ballot transmission; and high unemployment. That's why—in advance of forum at Wright Patterson Air Force Base—Sen. Brown announced a new effort to ensure our nation's servicemembers' and their families' rights are protected. The *Servicemembers' Protection Act* would protect military families by barring unlawful foreclosure, voter disenfranchisement, and employment discrimination of our nation's troops and their families.

### **Cutting Red Tape for Servicemembers to Get Freight Industry jobs**

Our servicemembers acquire skills in the military that should translate seamlessly to the civilian workforce. If they can operate a truck on a military base in Afghanistan, then they should be able to use those skills on the road in Kettering or Springboro. But many veterans face red tape and roadblocks when they try to apply their military skills and training to the civilian job market. Sen. Brown cosponsored bipartisan legislation, now awaiting signature by the president, aimed at cutting red tape for servicemembers so that they can get the certification needed to work in the freight industry.

## **Protecting Public Health and Safety**

### **Helping Southwest Ohioans Rebuild after Severe Weather**

As a result of devastating tornadoes, severe storms, and high winds that hit Southwest Ohio in March, many residents were without homes, communities suffered fatalities, and businesses and government facilities were damaged. The Village of Moscow sustained significant damage from the storms. More than 80 percent of homes were adversely impacted, a third of them destroyed or uninhabitable.



After the storms, Sen. Brown helped to open a new temporary center to offer assistance to those who were greatly affected by the storms. The center aids Southwest Ohioans seeking to apply for low-interest disaster loans in order to rebuild their homes and businesses. Sen. Brown will continue working to ensure adequate state and federal resources are available for Ohioans to rebuild their homes and businesses as well as to get affected Southwest Ohio communities back on their feet.

### **Cleaning Up Brownfield Sites in Southwest Ohio**

Ohio's brownfield sites, plots of land that are undevelopable due to pollution and hazardous waste, can be opportunities for redevelopment and growth. In May, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce a \$200,000 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant award to the Village of Lockland in Hamilton County to inventory brownfield sites and conduct environmental site assessments. These funds will help support clean-up and decontamination efforts critical for the safety and economic success of Lockland.

## **Protecting Southwest Ohio Consumers and Middle Class**

### **Protecting Seniors from Internet and Telemarketing Scams**

Criminals may see seniors—who have often saved their entire lives to enjoy retirement—as ripe targets for financial fraud. Internet and telemarketing scams are always troubling, but the targeting of senior citizens is particularly disturbing. In April, Sen. Brown's office and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) hosted free seminars in Cincinnati and Trotwood for seniors aimed at helping them protect their finances and avoid fraud and scams. The FTC is charged with helping to prevent fraud, deception, and unfair business practices in the marketplace. By providing seniors with the tools to protect themselves, we can prevent scams while providing retirees with the information they need to keep their nest egg safe and sound.

### **Protecting Children from Harmful Consumer Products**

After children's hospitals in Columbus, Cleveland, and Cincinnati reported to Sen. Brown that they are treating more and more children who have swallowed harmful and potentially fatal high-powered magnets. Sen. Brown urged the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to act to warn parents about these shiny, round magnets marketed as "Buckyballs," among other labels, which may appear like candy to children.

Due to the strength of these 'rare earth' magnets, when children swallow more than one, they attract to one another inside of a child's body, and can perforate children's stomachs, tear through intestines, rip the bowel, and damage other organs as magnets connect to one another. Too many children who have ingested these magnets have required multiple surgeries while

other children have died. Two weeks after Sen. Brown called on the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to protect children from potentially fatal high-powered magnets, the CPSC moved to ban the sale of “Buckyballs” from store shelves.

### **Fighting to End the Sports Blackout Rule**

Ohio sports fans should be able to watch their home team play on basic television, regardless of whether the game sells out. In January, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced that it is planning to reconsider the Sports Blackout Rule, a 1970s-era regulation that allows sports leagues like the NFL to black out broadcasts of a local sports game when the game does not sell out.

At the urging of Sen. Brown, the FCC released a petition urging the agency to open the Sports Blackout Rule for public feedback, the first step in repealing the regulation. Sen. Brown also encouraged Ohio football fans to contact the FCC and let them know how they feel about this outdated regulation, which is unfair to teams, fans, and taxpayers.

In July, the NFL announced the adoption of a new policy that would allow teams to lift local blackouts if at least 85 percent of seats are filled within 72 hours of kickoff. This overturns a longtime requirement that the stadium be filled to capacity before local television blackouts could be lifted. While the NFL’s new policy is an important step in addressing the outdated blackout policy, it also included a punitive portion that requires teams to forgo a significant portion of revenue from tickets sold over the 85 percent threshold. Sen. Brown joined Sen. Blumenthal of Connecticut and Rep. Brian Higgins of New York in writing a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell expressing concerns and urging the NFL to drop the punitive portion or provide waivers to give teams the flexibility to air games without being financially penalized.

### **Protecting Ohio Call Center Jobs**

Companies who send call center jobs abroad don’t just cause their customers frustration, they also hurt our economy by depleting communities of job opportunities. With thousands of jobs at risk, it is critical to protect call center workers in Ohio by deterring companies from shipping these jobs overseas. Sen. Brown called attention to the off-shoring of call center jobs and the need to keep these jobs here in America and in Ohio by joining call center workers in Dayton to outline new legislation he is supporting to help keep call center jobs in the U.S.

The *United States Call Center Worker and Consumer Protection Act of 2012* would require companies to disclose to callers when their calls are transferred abroad, make businesses that move call center jobs overseas ineligible for federal grants or loans, direct the Department of Labor to make a public list of such companies, and require agencies to give preference to U.S. employers that do not appear on this list.

### **Miami Valley Leader Named to Critical Consumer Advisory Board**

Miami Valley Fair Housing Center president and CEO Jim McCarthy has been on the frontline of the battle against foreclosures, working to keep families in their homes and fighting predatory lending practices that hit the Dayton area especially hard. In August, Sen. Brown announced that Mr. McCarthy was named to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s Consumer Advisory

Board. Mr. McCarthy will serve on the 25-person panel that will advise the CFPB on a broad range of consumer financial issue and emerging market trends.

### **Providing Cincinnati Seniors with Safe, Affordable Housing**

Facing rising prescription, food, and energy costs, seniors are often challenged to find affordable housing. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded funding to a Cincinnati neighborhood to redevelop blighted and abandoned property while providing safe, affordable housing for seniors. Sen. Brown announced that Community Builders, Inc. will receive these resources through HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant program to build more than 300 housing units in Avondale. This new construction will revitalize Avondale while ensuring that 300 senior households in Cincinnati will have a place to live safely and comfortably.

## **Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare**

### **Cracking Down on Drug Store Burglaries**

Drug addicts have shown that they will stop at nothing to feed their addiction—whether by targeting and bribing senior citizens to get access to painkillers or through the outright theft of drugs from pharmacies. Local and federal law enforcement officials should be equipped with the proper tools to crack down on pharmaceutical theft.

Following a July robbery of a drug store in Beavercreek, Sen. Brown called for swift passage of the *Strengthening and Focusing Enforcement to Deter Organized Stealing and Enhance Safety (SAFE DOSES) Act*, legislation that would help crack down on drug robberies and stiffen the penalties for pharmaceutical theft. Not only will this help keep prescription painkillers off our streets and out of the hands of abusers, but it will help protect pharmacies and their employees from being targeted in these often-violent crimes.

### **Improving Outcomes at Dayton's Social Security Administration Office**

It is critical that Ohio's Social Security Administration (SSA) offices are adequately-staffed and that the application process is streamlined to improve service and ensure timely and accurate decisions. Following a *Dayton Daily News* report on delays at the Dayton SSA office, representatives from Sen. Brown's office met with SSA officials to urge the SSA to reduce the backlog and improve service for Miami Valley workers and families. Although the Dayton Social Security Administration (SSA) office has made substantial progress in cutting wait times in 2012, more needs to be done to serve Ohioans efficiently and effectively. Delays in processing claims and appeals stretch families' budgets and can make medical conditions worse.

## **Supporting Southwest Ohio's Students**

### **Southwest Ohio Student Served as Senate Page**

A Cincinnati high school student spent his summer in Washington D.C. as part of the U.S. Senate Page Program. Sen. Brown nominated Christopher Warren, a Walnut Hill High School sophomore for the program. Christopher was one of 30 students from across the United States to serve as a senate page. The Senate Page program is a highly-competitive program that allows

students to go to D.C. and serve as a page for their respective Senators. Christopher was nominated based on his success in the classroom, on the job, and in the athletic arena.

### **Preventing Student Loan Rate Hikes**

Excessive student loan debt means fewer of our young adults will be able to buy a home, start a business, or continue on to graduate school. With nearly half of young college graduates jobless or underemployed, allowing interest rates on federal student loans to double would have been a step backwards for Ohio's students and economy. In late June, Congress passed Sen. Brown's *Stop the Student Loan Interest Rate Hike Act* to maintain the current interest rate of 3.4 percent. Without Congressional action, more than 22,000 University of Cincinnati and 10,000 Wright State University students would have been forced to pay significantly more for their Stafford student loans if Congress had not passed the legislation by July 1. The rate on these loans would have doubled from 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent. According to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, the higher interest rate would have added approximately \$1,000 in loan debt per loan for the average student.



## **Advocating for Minority Communities in Southwest Ohio**

### **Renewing the call to Include Charles P. Young House in the National Park System**

Much of our nation's history comes through Ohio—from the Northwest Territory to the Underground Railroad, from presidents to poets. It is only fitting that the home of the first African American superintendent of a National Park now be part of the very park system that he helped to support and strengthen. In August, Sen. Brown renewed his call to include the Charles P. Young House in the National Park System (NPS). By designating the Charles P. Young House as part of the NPS, the home would receive additional resources for maintenance and upkeep, ensuring the preservation of this historic home.

## **Supporting Southwest Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy**

### **Supporting Southwest Ohio Farmers During Summer Drought**

Many Ohio farmers and agricultural-related businesses found their livelihoods threatened by serious drought this summer – a drought that led the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to designate all 88 counties in the state as disaster areas. With more than 98 percent of Ohio experiencing severe or moderate drought conditions, Sen. Brown called on the U.S. House of Representatives to schedule a vote on the Senate-passed bipartisan, five-year farm bill that

provides critical assistance to farmers affected by drought. The bill contains critical risk management and disaster response provisions for Ohio's farmers and agricultural producers.

Sen. Brown helped to craft the Senate farm bill which passed in June and would save taxpayers \$23 billion while creating jobs, boosting rural development, and extending critical disaster programs such as the drought relief assistance Ohio farmers and agricultural businesses depended on after the 2012 drought. The Senate farm bill included an amendment introduced by Sen. Brown that would fund critical USDA Rural Development programs that help Ohio communities update wastewater and sewer infrastructure systems, provide access to capital for Ohio agricultural producers and small businesses, and provide technical assistance to beginning farmers and ranchers.

### **Promoting Renewable Energy**

Businesses and manufacturers in Ohio are leading the way when it comes to the innovative use of solar energy. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce a Rural Energy for American Program (REAP) grant for Winelco, Inc. in West Chester from the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development agency. These resources will allow Winelco, Inc. to install a 90-kilowatt photo voltaic solar power system that will generate 97,570 kilowatt hours annually.

### **Announcing Federal Resources to Update Farm Equipment in Shelby County**

Federal resources were awarded to a business in Shelby County to purchase a new energy-efficient grain dryer. Sen. Brown announced that a Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Grant of \$19,281 has been awarded to Elsass Farms, Inc. from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development agency. The grant will allow Elsass Farms, Inc. to replace an old grain dryer with a new energy-efficient model, saving 84,569 kilowatt hours annually. A new grain dryer will help Elsass Farms save on its energy costs and make the necessary updates to maintain modern, energy-efficient operations.